effect and shortfall in the production of some commodities.

(c) The main thrust of Government policy is to increase the production of essential commodities, particularly those which are in short supply. The Public Distribution System through which several essential commodities are distributed at reasonable prices is continuously being expanded and strengthened. Foodgrains at cheaper rates are distributed in tribal areas and under special schemes like National Rural Employment Programme and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme. Efforts are also made to distribute certain essential commodities like vegetables, pulses, etc. through the retail outlets of the cooperative network at some places like Delhi. Import of certain essential commodities like edible oils and pulses is made to augment domestic supply. Export of several essential commodities are either banned or regulated. The State Governments/ Union Territories have been, from time to time, requested to take prompt and strict action against hoarders, black marketeers and other antisocial elements under the provisions of Essential Commodities Act and similar legislations.

Merger of IDC and NDDB

708. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for merger of the Indian Dairy Corporation and the National Dairy Development Board;

(b) if so, whether there is any agitation from the employees of Indian Dairy Corporaion against this merger and if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government propose to take any measures to ensure that the interest of the employees of either organisation do not suffer in the transfer or merger?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURI (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) A decision has since been taker to undertake a legislation for the establishment of a Statutory Corporation to take the place of the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) and Indian Dairy Corporaion (IDC).

(b) Some representations have been received in this regard.

(c) The interests of the employees would not suffer with the setting up of the Statutory Corporation.

Production of minerals in the country

709. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total value of minerals produced in the country during the years 1984-85, 1985-86 and 1986-87 mineral-wise;

(b) what is the percentage increase in the production mineral-wse in 1986 as compared to 1985; and

(c) what measures are being taken by Government to increase the production of the minerals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MINES IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRIMATI RAMDULARI SINHA): (a) and (b) The information is given in the Annexure (*See* Appendix CXLIII, Annexure No-41)

(c) Regular exploration are being carried out by Mineral Exploration agencies viz. Geological Survey of India, Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited and the State Directorates of Geology and Mining to locate and prove mineral reserves which will be helpful to open new mines and to plant for augmentation of mineral production.